

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LABELING IMPORTED PRODUCE

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 1998

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue that is extremely important to the health of millions of American families, the labeling of imported produce. We were reminded just how critical of an issue this is twice last year when a breakout of *Cyclospora* bacteria occurred in imported Guatemalan raspberries and when the Hepatitis A virus was found in strawberries which were imported from Mexico. In this particular case, these strawberries were illegally used in our nation's school lunch program and more than 150 students in Michigan were infected. When you take into consideration that shipments were sent to as many as 15 other states, thousands more could have been at risk.

What is perhaps more frightening than the presence of these strawberries in our nation's school lunch program, is the fact that these children are in just as much danger eating dinner at home. Every day, millions of Americans buy produce without knowing where it was grown. Though nearly every consumer product we purchase has origin labeling, the fruits and vegetables we eat do not. Taking into consideration that foreign countries do not adhere to the same phytosanitary and labor standards as American growers and handlers, it is very likely that harmful fruits and vegetables are being stocked on the shelves of our local grocery stores.

Mr. Speaker, this is simply unconscionable. Many of these countries are using pesticides that are currently banned in the United States or using irrigated water that is contaminated with raw sewage. It is also not uncommon to find young children being forced to work up to 12 hours a day picking and sorting these products. It is for many of these reasons that 80% of those asked in a recent survey believe that produce should have a label indicating its country of origin.

I, along with many of my colleagues, have already become a cosponsor of H.R. 1232, the Imported Produce Labeling Act of 1997, introduced by our good friend, the late Sonny Bono. This legislation will extend our current labeling laws, under the Tariff Act of 1930, to require country of origin labeling on imported produce at the final point of sale, the grocery stores. This requirement is neither complicated nor burdensome to farmers and retailers. H.R. 1232 will simply require that the country of origin of imported produce be displayed in a clear and visible manner if the produce package is not already labeled. For example, a grocer could place a sign above the food bin or include the information on or next to the price sign.

This action not only promotes safety awareness, but is good trade policy as well. Many of our major trading partners, including Canada, Japan, Australia and various European

nations, require country of origin labeling for imported produce, including the fruits and vegetables they buy from the United States. H.R. 1232 will place American farmers and consumers on a level playing field with our trading partners by harmonizing our labeling policies.

Most importantly, however, this action will provide American consumers with the opportunity to decide for themselves what fruits and vegetables they wish to buy. I firmly believe that it is not only a parent's right to know where the food they are feeding their family originated, but is also our responsibility to provide safe food to our nation's children. It is my understanding that Congressman Condit has recently requested to become the first sponsor of H.R. 1232 for the propose of adding cosponsors and working for its consideration. I applaud this action and urge all my colleagues, who have not already done so, to strongly consider cosponsoring this important legislation and support its passage when it reaches the Floor.

TRIBUTE TO REV. ANTHONY W. WILCOTS, A MAN WITH A MISSION

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 1998

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend marked a celebration for a fine young man who is serving as shepherd to some of my constituents. That young man is Reverend Anthony W. Wilcots. Rev. Wilcots is the pastor of the Liberty Baptist Church of Elizabeth, New Jersey. Although his physical presence with this church is short-lived, the spirituality and lessons he has taught are far-reaching. As we begin our life's journey we never know what paths we'll cross or with whom we'll come in contact but if we're fortunate to be prepared and faithful we are usually blessed to meet and serve those for whom we were destined.

Rev. Wilcots' journey has taken him far and wide and he and his congregants have certainly benefitted. Rev. Wilcots, a native of Houston, Texas, is a graduate with the Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas Southern University, the Master of Divinity degree from the School of Theology, Oral Roberts University and the Master of Sacred Theology degree from Yale University School of Divinity. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Social Ethics at Drew University. His evangelistic ministry has carried him to college campuses, churches and tent crusades in over 30 states, the District of Columbia and six foreign countries. Mr. Speaker, as you can see Rev. Wilcots has taken his calling seriously and continues to increase his capacity to serve the minds and souls of many.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in expressing our appreciation to Rev. Anthony W. Wilcots and his family for his contributions to our community.

HONORING VILICIA ELIZABETH CADE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the skill and achievements of Vilicia Elizabeth Cade. Her contribution to public and community service is incomparable.

Vilicia was taught the value of community service and scholarship at a young age. As a child, she was often involved in community service through her family's church. Her zeal for community service found its firm foundations from these experiences.

In 1984, Vilicia attended the College of New Paltz. While enrolled full time she was involved in various community service endeavors. One particular project, involved creating a plan to provide resources for migrant workers. In addition, Ms. Cade stood in the forefront to fight injustice. She helped organize peaceful and successful demonstrations against apartheid. These demonstrations eventually lead to her college's discontinuing its use of a bank that had investments in South Africa. In the end, NYPRIG asked Ms. Cade to serve as a poster model for their 1986-97 campaign.

In 1986, she joined Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. As a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, she continued her community service endeavors. In addition, her local chapter started a scholarship fund in the Sorority's name for female students. Vilicia obtained her Bachelor's degree in 1988. Without reservation her peers voted for her to be the first recipient of the "NIA" Award, an award for the highest grade point average in her major. She also received a full fellowship for graduate studies. In 1989 she attended the State University of New York at Albany for graduate school.

Upon returning to Brooklyn, Vilicia continued in her commitment to community and scholarship. She obtained employment with the Federation Employment Guidance Service (FECS). Through her employment as a case manager with "at risk" New York City Public High School students, she organized college trips and encouraged students to be actively involved in service learning projects. In 1996, she obtained her second Masters degree from Long Island University.

Vilicia was blessed with two beautiful sons, Jelani Omari (deceased) and Curtis Anthony. Encouraged by her supportive family, friends, and Sorors, Vilicia continues to fight for the betterment of her community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Vilicia Elizabeth Cade for all of her achievements, for being a woman who dares to be different, and for showing young women everywhere that they can do and accomplish anything.

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